

PROCEEDINGS  
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A NEW RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD FROM THE GREAT  
BASIN.

BY JOSEPH GRINNELL.

[Contribution from the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology of the University of California.]

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For a number of years students of birds have found difficulty in referring the red-winged blackbird of the Great Basin region of the western United States to any one of the described subspecies. Ridgway (Birds N. and Mid. Amer., part 2, 1902, page 340, footnote) includes it under the name *Agelaius phoeniceus neutralis* and remarks as follows: "Specimens from southern California and northern Lower California seem to be somewhat different from Great Basin examples, but I do not venture to separate them, the series of specimens being scarcely satisfactory." Taylor (Univ. Calif. Publ. Zool., vol. 7, 1912, page 382) treats of the Red-winged Blackbirds of Humboldt County, Nevada, under the heading: "*Agelaius phoeniceus* (subspecies indet.)."

Material has accumulated in the California Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, until there is now fair basis for a study of the situation. There seems abundant justification for naming a new race of *Agelaius phoeniceus*, and this I do as follows:

***Agelaius phoeniceus nevadensis*** subsp. nov.

NEVADA REDWINGED BLACKBIRD

*Type*.—Female adult; No. 8800, Univ. Calif. Mus. Vert. Zool.; Quinn River Crossing, Humboldt County, Nevada; May 17, 1909; collected by W. P. Taylor; orig. No. 720.

*Subspecific characters*.—In shape of bill and other general characters closely similar to *A. p. sonoriensis*; male scarcely distinguishable, but female conspicuously darker colored, on account of the great relative breadth of black streaking both above and below; in this respect similar to female of *A. p. caurinus*, but bright rusty edgings on back and wings replaced by ashy and pale ochraceous; bill in male of *caurinus* more slender than in either *sonoriensis* or *nevadensis*.

*Range.*—Associationally suitable parts of the Great Basin faunal area, at least in Nevada and northeastern California. Specimens at hand as follows: *Nevada*: Humboldt County: Quinn River Crossing 22, Big Creek Ranch 2, Virgin Valley 4, Thousand Creek Flat 2; *California*: Modoc County: Goose Lake 4, Sugar Hill 1, Parker Creek 8, Alturas 11; Siskiyou County: Mayten 7; Plumas County: Meadow Valley 1; Inyo County: Lone Pine 1, Independence 17. Total, 80.

*Remarks.*—The new form belongs to the weak-billed category of Red-wings. It is thus easily distinguished from *A. p. neutralis* of southern California. The full-width buffy bar on the wing in the male, and the conspicuously striped (not blended) coloration of the female render *nevadensis* distinct from *A. p. californicus*. (For correct assignment of characters and relationships of the latter form, see Mailliard, *Condor*, vol. 12, 1910, pages 63-70.) *A. p. caurinus* has the feeblest bill of all the western forms, and the female, although heavily streaked, has much redder edgings to the feathers dorsally than in *nevadensis*. *A. p. sonoriensis* and *A. p. nevadensis* both have pale "ground-color," but the latter has much wider black streaking both above and below. These facts recall the situation among the song sparrows occupying corresponding habitats, both faunal and associational, and suggest that similar factors bear upon these remotely related birds in such a way as to produce like results.